

IX. Conclusion

As a South Valley resident put it during the draft presentation of this plan, the Isleta Boulevard and Village Centers Sector Development Plan is a plan “by the people, for the people.” The extent of the public process to create this plan was comprehensive and collaborative, built upon information exchange and valuing local knowledge. According to the same resident, the planning process for this sector plan was one that “empower[ed] the community to determine what it wants.”

“This is a plan by the people, for the people... It empowers the community to determine what it wants.”
- South Valley resident during the 6/15/05 public meeting

No planner could prescribe what the Isleta corridor community needs better than the residents themselves, who know first-hand the threats and opportunities that confront their community. This sector plan is a testament to the spirit and commitment of South Valley residents who love their community enough to fight for its unique spirit and character and to ensure that it always remains a place that feels like home. Given how dedicated local residents were to this planning process, the importance of honoring the work they put into the sector plan is paramount.

The Isleta corridor needs a sector plan “with teeth,” as community members were fond of saying throughout the planning process. The need for this sector plan stems from the community’s desire to preserve the sense of place along Isleta Boulevard, to help protect the remaining agricultural land, and to ensure that development enhances the corridor and reflects its history, rather than detract from it.

Without planning intervention, what makes the Isleta corridor so special could be lost forever. It will be lost to strip-style development, to suburban land use patterns, to generic franchises, to paved-over farmland, to views of shopping centers instead of the Sandias, to “Anywhere, USA.” Residents know that the Isleta corridor is anything *but* Anywhere, USA – and that’s how they want it to remain. This sector plan responds to their desire to remain distinctive.

In order for the sector plan to be as effective as community members intend it to be, the four new zones presented in this plan must be passed as ordinance. This plan also contains a number of policy options broader than the scope of the sector plan, but necessary for the community to pursue: setting up a land trust, working toward agricultural policies for the entire South Valley, revising the Greenbelt Tax policy, helping to preserve historic structures, and organizing local businesses. In partnership, the new Isleta Boulevard zoning and the continued efforts on the part of residents to fight for their community will make the difference for the future of the Isleta corridor.

